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THE MARCH "LOTOS" EXHIBITION.

TO visit the Landscape Painters, and then go uptown to look at the Lotos Club Exhibition of twenty-four American paintings, was to put a fitting final chord to a song of the woodland. There the promise well-nigh fulfilled, here the acme of artistic attainment, the onleading strains of which were present in the larger exhibition.

The advantage of small exhibitions carefully selected, over a large number of promiscuously hung canvases, was here, again in evidence. Every one of these works had an individual claim, yet all supported each other to a united whole. To signalize any one painting over the others would be hardly possible. Still it may be said that the three Homer Martins, hung together with a keen sense of the fitness of things, impressed me most. It was like a three-stanzed song, with tenderness, yet incomparable strength, the "Old Normandy Church" giving in its liquid robustness the motive; the mighty "Adirondack Scenery" forcing with imposing grandeur the climax; "Newport Neck," in subdued tone, the finale of an exquisite echo from Nature's temple.

The three Inness pictures had their own merits. "The Wood Gatherers" had deservedly the place of honor, if such a place there was where all were peers. The little known "Tragedy of the Sea," however, was strikingly and masterly composed.

There was a Blakelock "Moonlight," with an exquisitely vibrating light effect. The Julian Rix was not, on the contrary, altogether satisfactory; the landscape was true and sincere, but the sky flecked, mottled, confused, detracting from the good qualities of the rest of the painting. The four Wyants were of the best work we have of this lamented master, the little "Early Twilight" being succulent and free, the "Keene Valley" splendid in tone. Of the men represented with one picture each, I would only mention the splendid "Landscape" of J. Francis Murphy.

THE FIFTY-SEVENTH STREET EXHIBITION.

THE vista, on entering the Fine Arts Building, to the Dagnan-Bouveret painting is superb. On passing into the first hall one sees, in the far distance, through the two door-openings, the "Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus." The steps which lead from room to room are covered with a green carpet, in fortunate color-harmony with the tone-key of the painting, and may serve, as it were, as steps to a throne on which this striking scene is enacted. One should linger at this first entrance to receive an impression of this masterly painting not to be had in any other way. On closer inspection, when the Vanderbilt Gallery is entered, further beauties will be discovered. It was a daring, almost incongruous, yet overpowering thought to introduce the civilization of posterity, in the family of the artist, in adoration before the Presence, when that civilization had its birth.

A glance at the walls will at once convince how altered the surroundings from the early exhibitions. The tone is different. The high key and crying mannerisms of the past have changed to more solid work. The general character of the Exhibition is hardly different from the Academy shows. At once we notice the excellent manner in which the Hanging Committee has performed its work. It can hardly be improved upon, with one or two exceptions; for instance, when No. 5 did pass the jury—cause unknown—it was not quite necessary to hang it on the line. It might also have been better to have Nos. 258 and 262, the two Herters, farther apart. The same light effect in both paintings detracts the one from the other.

As to the artistic value of the paintings, it is what *Mr. Venus* might have called "very various." There is poor work there, even bad work. But the worst pictures are by men that have done better. Some show it even here. This being the case, will it do any good to pillory a poor painting, because it is an abortion? The excellent judgment of the jury did not admit a single picture that is irredeemable. A furtive criticism, here and there, is all that is required, while we pass on to what is worthy of praise.

There are some sixty portraits, many of them very attractive. Cecilia Beaux's No. 306 is good, with strong, free brush, while her portrait No. 339 is poor and poster-like. Thayer's No. 329 is unfinished, with a poorly-modelled left arm, while Maurice Fromkes gives Mr. John Noble Stearns in an expressive manner. Jessie A. Walker's little pastel is rather good. The portrait of Mrs. E. N., by William H. Hyde, is excellent, the mourning costume being happily relieved against sofa and background; it is better than No. 198. Sergeant Kendall's portrait of Mrs. William Gammell is a clever piece of painting, as is Lee Lufkin's portrait of a young girl. Adelaide Chase's work is better in No. 268 than in 273, although both pictures are fair. Joseph H. Boston gives a virile man's head. Bishop Cox's portrait is very poor. One of the best portraits is No. 259, by

Carroll Beckwith, while No. 148, a sketch by Miss Champney, is very promising. Kenneth Frazier's "The Orchid" is perhaps a portrait, but far from convincing, for instead of being satisfied with the orchid in the hair, he has made an orchid of the whole canvas, with confusing colors. Of children's portraits I like to notice Sarah W. Whitman's "Rosamond," which is true to child nature; the gilt lettering at the top, however, mars somewhat the effect. John W. Alexander sends the child sitting in front of her doll, which was seen in Philadelphia; to me the dress is somewhat stiff, and the child's face too much a reflection, as to color, of the doll's face before her.

There is an equal variety in the landscapes and figure-pieces. Some tease the eye with eccentric cadences, making us yearn for what is not there; others, in delightful harmony, tell their tale in warm and expressive method. Some show, unblushingly, color vulgarities that offend; then, again, we find an idea grasped with spacious and majestic power. Here a complicated composition, there an infinitely fine production of the art of self-restraint.

The prize-winners, Douglas Volk and W. L. Lathrop wear their laurels justly. The "Woodland Maid" touches the height of true poetry with perfect technical execution. The "Clouds and Hills" of Lathrop is simply composed, but grand in its suggestion of immensity.

One man's work more than any other has attracted me in this exhibition. A good many years ago I saw once hanging in a poor light, skied, a "Sheepfold by Night," which was very unsatisfactory to me. Now, there is no man who is not more or less subject to first impressions, and somehow that poor skied picture has always come in my mind when I felt inclined to admire Ben Foster's work. The four canvases which this artist shows here are, however, convincing as to his place in the very foremost ranks of our landscapists. The subtlety and poetic mystery which hover over his night scenes are charming to a degree. The work of C. H. Fromuth is very much like that of Charles Cottet, the similarity disturbing the enjoyment of its good qualities. No. 238, by Roger Donohue, looks like the geyser's spouting in the Yellowstone Park, instead of a surf over the bar. W. R. Derrich has a very good landscape. "The Gray Day," by Wm. M. Chase, is excellent, while the "Autumn Meadows," by Van Laer, has splendid qualities. The meaning of No. 349, "Afternoon Sky," by Charles Hopkinson, is, however, just out of my reach. E. S. Hamilton has some good color in "The Enchanted Wood." Needham's work, in No. 184, is striking and suggestive, but the pigment is far too pronounced in No. 196 and No. 199. The Carnegie medal picture by Tryon is one of the best landscapes here.

The figure work, of which there is a fair proportion, is equally interesting. The "Roses and Lilies" by Mary F. MacMonnies, perhaps slightly too colorful, is conceived with great breadth and freedom, and is an excellent work. The panel for the Appellate Court, "The Common Law," by Kenyon Cox, is hard, and dry, and loud, under the strong light of the Vanderbilt Gallery; but Mr. Cox always knows what he is doing, and what is glaring here, is the very thing for an ill-lighted court-room or corridor. The finely modulated lines will then soften in the subdued light, the colors will tone down, and still they will brighten the wall which they will adorn. Not judging therefore, where it hangs now, but where it will be, this panel is highly successful. Curran's work is pleasing as ever. Albert Herter's work is masterly, with defects, in "The Eve of St. Agnes." The shadows on the face are too deep and annoying, even if the high light is held responsible for this; the face also has a pained, hence inartistic expression, while the fingers are positively bad. In "At Twilight" the defect is found in the posing. A newsboy on the sidewalk saw the picture when it was carried out to the van, and cried out: "Gee, Jim, he's chewing her ear." Still, in spite of deficiency, these two pictures are the work of a man who will attain a commanding position.

The work of H. B. Snell, A. A. Wigand, C. Morris Young, George Elmer Browne, G. H. Bogert, G. DeForest Brush, the splendid Indian camp scene of E. Irving Couse, and some others, give ample food for study and admiration. In the Central Gallery some exquisite miniatures and virile bronzes are shown. Thus the twenty-first annual exhibition of the Society of American Artists will, during the month of April, be an attractive lounging place for the lover and student of art.

THE TEN PAINTERS.

A CULT should be seen by itself. It is to the advantage of the luminaries that their paintings are hanging in the Durand-Ruel Galleries in surroundings which might not be of benefit to another class of pictures. The Japanese matting and special wall covering harmonize with the general tone of these examples, which of themselves sustain each other. An air of tender freshness is inhaled when stepping into that room; there is no garishness in the high key of some of these canvases, nor is the fulgence felt which